

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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For Immediate Release

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JERSEYVILLE RESIDENTS PLEAD GUILTY TO ARSON AND PROPERTY DESTRUCTION CHARGES

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that **Daniel D. MORELL**, age 24, **Michael I. WILLETT**, age 22, and **Donny SCHREIBER**, age 24, all of Jerseyville, Illinois, pled guilty on March 23, 2006, in United States District Court in East St. Louis. **MORELL** pled guilty to one count of Destruction of Property; one count of attempted arson; and four counts of arson. **WILLETT** pled guilty to one count of attempted arson, and three counts of arson. **SCHREIBER** pled guilty to Destruction of Property.

In a related case, **Michael J. ABBOTT**, age 23, also of Jerseyville, pled guilty to one count of Destruction of Property; one count of attempted arson; and four counts of arson.

The Destruction of Property count involved the destruction of property of WJBM Radio Station on October 18, 2005. The attempted arson involved the attempt to burn the WJBM Radio Station building between October 21 and 24, 2005. **ABBOTT** and **MORELL** pled guilty to an arson at the WJBM Radio Station building on October 18, 2005.

The remaining arsons, to which **ABBOTT**, **WILLETT**, and **MORELL** all pled guilty, involved fires at the 518 East Banquet Center in Jerseyville, on October 31, 2005, and the arson of two different telephone lines in Jersey County on October 31, 2005.

ABBOTT and **SCHREIBER** are scheduled to be sentenced on June 12, 2006. **WILLETT** and **MORELL** are scheduled to be sentenced on June 19, 2006. The penalties that can be imposed on each count of arson and attempted arson are a term of imprisonment of not less than five (5) years and not more than twenty (20) years, a fine of not more than \$250,000.00, or both, a special assessment of \$100.00, and a term of supervised release of not more than three (3) years. The penalty that can be imposed for the count of destroying or injuring property at the WJBM Radio Station is a term of imprisonment of not more than ten (10) years, a fine of not more than \$250,000.00, or both, a special assessment of \$100.00, and a term of supervised release of not more than three (3) years.

The successful prosecution is a result of an investigation conducted by the Jersey County Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Simonson.